(b) if so, what are the deatils thereof; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to avoid such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Dr. Arun Manilal Gandhi (grandson of Mahatma Gandhi) had confirmed reservation for three 2nd Class berths on 14-6-90 by 8030 Up Howrah Bombay Express ex. Akola to Bombay. But Dr. Gandhi and his family could not board the train to occupy their reserved berths as a large number of Members of Republican Party of India had entered the reserved compartments. The situation created was beyond the control of the station staff. However, accommodation was arranged for Dr. Gandhi in 7340 Up Nagpur-Dadar-Sewagram Express, the next available train, by which they travelled. The Railway Administration is refunding full fare to Dr. Gandhi for the journey he could not undertake.

(c) The entry of unauthorised passengers in reserved coaches is partly a law and order problem. To curb this evil the following steps are taken by the railways:

(i) Surprise checks are conducted with the help of Government Railway Police/Railway Protection Force and unauthorised passengers found travelling in reserved coaches are detrained and fined under the provisions of the Railways Act.

(ii) The fine for travelling unauthorisedly in reserved compartments under the Railway Act 1989 effective from 1-7-1990 has been enhanced to extend upto Rs. 500/- from Rs. 20/-.

(iii) Disciplinary action against the staff in proved cases of connivance.

Introduction of small bags for wheat and rice

1089. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce 50 kg. bags for wheat and rice instead of 90 kg. bags to facilitate handling by the labourers;

(b) what is the percentage of transit and storage loss of foodgrains during this year in comparison to earlier year; and

(c) what further steps Government propose to take to avoid pilferage and adulteration during the transit and storage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL): (a) The Tripartite Committee on ILO Conventions of the Ministry of Labour recommended the use of bags of not more than 50 kgs. by manual labour. The FCI are examining the technical and financial implications of the switch-over to 50 kgs. packing in the handling of foodgrains.

(b) The transit and storage shortages for 1990-91 will be known after close of the financial year. Accounts for 1989-90 have not been finalised so far. The percentage of transit and storage shortages of foodgrains in terms of quantity was 1.25 per cent during 1988-89 as against 1.72 per cent during 1987-88.

(c) The steps taken by the FCI to reduce the storage and transit losses are:

(i) Strict enforcement of quality specifications relating to moisture during procurement of foodgrains;

(ii) Reduction in the quantum of foodgrains filled in each bag;

(iii) Installation of weigh-bridges in depots having capacity of 5000 tonnes or more;

(iv) Minimising the use of open wagons;

(v) Administrative measures such as tightening of security at depots, intensifying surprise checks, ensuring regular stock verifications etc.;

(vi) Augmentation of covered storage capacity;

(vii) Introduction of machine stitching of bags.

Drought relief work in Rajasthan

1090. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the acute drought situation in Rajasthan;

(b) the districts declared drought affected in Rajasthan; and

(c) the details of the drought relief work taken up in the State and the number of people employed in each district as a result thereof this year in comparison to the earlier five year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) According to the India Meteorological Department report for the period 1st June to 8th August, 1990, West Rajasthan and East Rajasthan meteorological subdivisions have experienced excess/normal rainfall, the percentage departure from the normal being + 129% and + 10 per cent respectively. There is thus no acute drought situation in Rajasthan now.

(b) o district has been declared drought affected by the State Government during the current monsoon period.

(c) Does not arise.

Production and consumption of Vanaspati

1091. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total consumption of Vanaspati in the country; State-wise;

(b) what is the production of Vanaspati in the country; State-wise; and

(c) in what manner Government propose to reduce the shortage if any, of Vanaspati?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL): (a) and (b) A Statement is annexed. (*See* below)

(c) Some of the measures taken by the Government with a view to reducing the shortage of vanaspati are:—

(i) Stock limits of edible oil seeds restored to lower levels.

(ii) Increase in minimum margin for bank advances ordered by RBI; and

(iii) Central Government is in constant touch with the State Governments to take up dehoarding operations.